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ABSTRACT

This theme issue on gifted high school students presents several feature articles, a California legislative update, and an editorial. In "Summer Seminar '93--California in the 21st Century," Janis Van Dreal describes a 2-week residential program in which gifted high school students examined California's future. "Visiting a Gifted Program in Russia" (Sandra Kaplan and others) describes the similarities and differences between the perceptions of gifted American and Russian students toward curriculum differentiation. In "Supporting Talent Development Is Only Half of the Answer: A Reexamination of Issues Raised in the September 'Communicator'," Barbara Clark refutes John Feldhusen's approach and argues that educators cannot abandon the unique needs of gifted and talented children. "Learning Differences: A Primer for Parents" (Madeleine D. Brandli and Kathleen Pommer) discusses prevention, identification, accommodations, and advocacy for gifted students with learning disabilities. Other articles include: "GATE Points the Way in the Reform Movement: CAG's High School Demonstration Sites" (Ron Fontaine); "The Seminar Program in the San Diego City Schools" (Betty Olson); "Accelerated College Entrance: The Benefits of ACE" (Terry A. Thomas); "Community and School Service--Another Challenge for ed/Talented Students" (Sharon Freitas); "The Orange County High School of the Arts" (Ralph Opacic); "AP Classes in a Rural High School? No Problem!" (Tim Guzik); and "A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Words (Camcorders in the Classroom)" (Diana R. Alford). (Most papers contain references.) (JDD)

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COMMUNICATOR

HIGH SCHOOL GIFTED

ED 365 040

Summer Seminar '93 - California in the 21st Century

by Janis Van Dreal

Intelligence can only come when there is freedom—freedom to think, to observe, to question. -Krishnamurti

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One of the greatest challenges of secondary education is meeting the needs of gifted adolescents. Their bodies, minds and emotions are in transition, if not outright upheaval. They strive for both independence and social acceptance, conformity and experimentation, and most of all personal identity. At a time when "freedom to think, to observe, to question" is essential, traditional secondary education offers larger classes, departmentalized learning and mandated curriculum. For gifted teens, "differentiated" too often only means "accelerated."

This past year CAG accepted the challenge of providing a program which met both the intellectual and social needs of gifted adolescents. The result was CAG Summer Seminar 1993, a two-week residential program held July 11-24 at Westmont College in Montecito. Twenty-two entering 10th and 11th graders and seven staff members came from around the state to launch California's first statewide summer school. No one knew quite what to expect from this pilot program, but it was soon apparent that intellectual challenge plus the freedom to discover and grow together equaled a powerful learning experience for everyone involved.

Grace Ma, Stephanie Flournoy, David Jackson, Aydee Gonzalez and Melanie Holm in Spanish Dance workshop

The Curriculum

This year's theme, "California in the 21st Century," was explored through an interdisciplinary, hands-on program. Featured study areas included classical philosophies, political and governance models, technology such as virtual reality and genetic engineering, community development and environmental needs, cultural, natural and individual diversity, power, ethics and the arts. Students also interacted with fourteen guest presenters, professionals in the fields of busi-

Continued on page 32

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Identification Is Not Enough

by Sandra Kaplan

The national trend to identify gifted students from under-represented populations and to ensure that gifted programs reflect the diversity of students in schools populations is fundamental. The concern to identify "minority students" for gifted programs, however, does not appear to parallel a concern for curricular experiences that are appropriate for these students. Placing gifted students from diverse economic and cultural backgrounds into a differentiated curriculum designed to reflect the needs, interests and abilities of gifted students from the majority population, could be more harmful than helpful and not a good way to enable these students to realize their full potential. The differentiated curriculum for students from diverse backgrounds should therefore include these components:

1. ***Common Differentiation*** or that component of the curriculum that is responsive to the similarities that unite gifted students regardless of economic or ethnic background. This component includes the core curriculum and the differentiated experiences of depth, complexity, novelty and acceleration.
2. ***Cultural Differentiation*** or that component of the curriculum that reflects and extends a student's identity as a member of an under-represented population. This component augments rather than supplants defined differentiated learning experiences. For example, an introduction to philosophy and the classics would juxtapose Jefferson's ideals with those of philosophers representing other cultures, or a literature course would relate American literature to literature of the student's culture. The differentiated curriculum must provide the gifted learner with a thorough grounding in the intellectual culture of the majority as well as relating this majority culture to the other cultures which make up the fabric of American society. Participation in a gifted program should never mean choosing between cultures or creating competition between cultures.
3. ***Participation Differentiation*** or that component of the curriculum that prepares the gifted learner to participate with dignity in a gifted program. Successful participation in a gifted program and the intellectual development and career aspirations that follow from this may separate a student from the interests of family and community. This can be a traumatic experience for both student and family—the family is threatened by the perception that the gifted child "thinks she is too good for us" and the student finds it difficult to share new interests with old friends. Alienation from family is often too high a price to pay for participation in a gifted program. (This, it might be added, is not infrequently a problem for *all* gifted students.) Gifted people (not just students) need to learn communication skills that show them how to maintain and enjoy relationships with many kinds of people. They also need social and emotional support from the gifted program as they develop their high potential and move into a new world.

We cannot identify and place students in a gifted program without a continuing commitment to their whole life. We must be sure that we make it not only possible for them to be gifted, but also comfortable and satisfying.

PUBLISHED BY THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

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Submission of material

CAG encourages all interested parties to submit articles for publication. All submissions will be given careful consideration. Photos and camera-ready art work are particularly desirable. Student work should be accompanied by teacher's name and school. Send all material with your name, address, and phone number to Jean Drum, *Communicator* Editor, 7822 Belgrave Avenue, Garden Grove, CA 92641. You may phone Ms. Drum at 714/892-1745.

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CALENDAR

January 29, 1994
CAG/Orange County Council for Gifted and Talented Education, 21st Annual Conference
Estancia High School, Costa Mesa
For information call Karen Grinfeld, 714/879-5834 or Pat Phelan, 714/957-2846.

March 4-6, 1994
32nd Annual CAG Conference
Oasis for Cultural Diversity
Palm Springs Convention Center and Wyndham Hotel
For information call 415/965-0653.

January 29, 1994
Children's Author Workshop for Parents and Students
Presenters: Robin Rector Krupp and Jody Fickes
Ventura
For information call Margaret Gosfield, 805/652-7229.

March 19, 1994
Mini-Conference for Parents, Educators and Students
Keynoter: Barbara Clark
Ventura
For information call Margaret Gosfield, 805/652-7229.

May 19–21, 1994
Student Leadership Conference for 7th–8th graders
Westmont College
For information call Margaret Gosfield, 805/652-7229.

NEWS BRIEFS

January Issue Devoted to Jeanne Delp

The January *Communicator* will be a memorial issue dedicated to the writings of Jeanne Delp (1927–1993) and remembrances by colleagues, friends and students. Jeanne was a pioneer in gifted education and a founder of CAG.

CAG Sponsors Art Contest

CAG will hold a juried art contest for students in grades 3 to 12. Entry deadline is January 31, 1994. Fifty works will be selected for exhibit during the annual CAG Conference in Palm Springs, March 4–6, 1994. Ribbons will be awarded to first, second and third place winners in each of three categories based on age. For more information, contact Carol Brown Spencer, Administrative Assistant, California Association for the Gifted, 415/965-0653.

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Jean Drum

Ready, Set, Reform!

by Jean Drum, Editor

Reform is an exciting idea and it is an idea dear to the hearts of Americans. In this country, which has as its very foundation a radically reformed concept of government, finding a better way, is a concept that we accept and embrace.

Right now it is the education of our young people that is calling for reform, and we are responding by planning for a new emphasis in our schools. Subject matter that is challenging, development of the habits of hard work, engaging students actively in learning and allowing them to learn at their own pace, and differentiated curriculum to meet individual needs are some of the suggestions made to improve education for all students. New ways of assessing student progress are being developed which will tap into the thinking skills of the students and demand evidence of their ability to apply what they have learned. All of these ideas are excellent, and can improve the educational experience for all students including the gifted.

In California, *Second To None*, the report of the California High School Task Force, has outlined the major ideas for school reform at the secondary level in this state. The interdisciplinary approach to subject matter is an important feature of this document, and since GATE programs have been using this for some time, its extension and growth will benefit gifted students. They are particularly challenged by the task of seeing relationships and using those relationships to unlock knowledge and understanding. High standards and expectations, an important feature of school reform, are indispensable to the full development of the gifted student, for unfortunately, it has all too often been possible for a bright youngster to get by while using only part of his potential. Portfolio assessments and the demise of the multiple choice test as a means of monitoring student progress will be a boon to gifted students. GATE students are often frustrated by the short answer test, since they can see many possibilities not covered by the answer choices. An opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge by showing that they can "analyze, organize, interpret, explain, synthesize, evaluate and communicate important experiences" will allow them full rein to use their gifts.

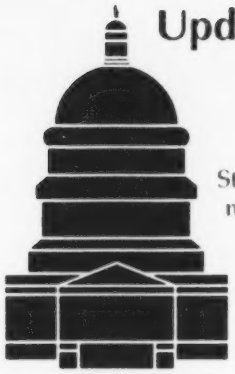
Cluster grouping for like interests and needs and flexible programming is also mentioned as part of the high school of the future in California. This is an excellent approach for gifted students, who can benefit from a chance to work closely with others, both teachers and students, with similar talents and interests. Interdisciplinary teams of teachers and larger blocks of time which will encourage and allow students to "solve complex problems, compose effective writing or design projects that measure real progress" are just what gifted students need. The CAG Summer Seminar has already shown how well this kind of scheduling can work, and the "honors block" found in the gifted program in many high schools has led the way. The school choice feature, which would allow students to attend "any school that has the program that most closely fits their interests" makes possible and practical high schools with special emphases—a technical-science major, or an arts major, for instance—that would create tremendous opportunities for the education of gifted young people. Other articles in this issue show how this sort of program is already in place here in California. The flexibility that is stressed in *Second To None* can allow GATE students to have access to specialized classes and also to be participants in the broader life of the high school community, a very important combination of options if they are to grow into adults who will both make full use of their gifts and then be able to work with others to serve mankind.

Second To None also talks of ensuring that faculty are proactive in supporting student success and seeing that students are "not stigmatized nor made to feel somehow different." We can hope that this will also serve to create a high school campus atmosphere where it is "OK to be smart," and that gifted students will not have to choose between using their gifts and being accepted by their peers.

"Courses of study to match their aspirations" is what *Second to None* is calling for. This is a high ideal and one of which California educators can be proud. We must ensure that these courses of study will truly match the aspirations of the gifted students of California.

Update From Sacramento

by Cathy Barkett



In fifteen years of working for the State Department of Education, I have never seen so much interest in school reform at every level of the educational system. Dwindling fiscal resources have forced us to examine and reexamine educational programs in terms of their cost effectiveness. Concern of educators and the general public over the preparedness of our graduates compels us to constantly ask if we are educating students so that they are equipped with the skills they need to enter the workforce or pursue higher education. Recent documents from the State level at the pre-kindergarten, elementary, middle and secondary levels suggest revisions in the way we conduct business. At the federal level, the Clinton administration has developed its own set of recommendations; those are described in the recently released "Proposal for the Reauthorization of the Hawkins-Stafford Act." Where are services for gifted and talented youth in all this reform activity? Does the reform movement place sufficient emphasis on insisting that *all* students, including those who are already functioning above grade level, constantly strive for greater understanding and achievement; or does it primarily address the needs of underachievers, with the rationale that "gifted students will succeed regardless of what we do (or don't do)" for them?

Let's look first at the State level. Educators and parents should be looking carefully at, and become involved in, the grade level initiatives. Three documents describe the elementary, middle and secondary reform agendas: *It's Elementary, Caught in the Middle,* and *Second to None.* All three documents call for changes in the way schools and classrooms are organized and include many outstanding suggestions for how schools can increase their effectiveness. All the suggestions in the three documents are guidelines, not mandates, and each school should develop a plan for change with the understanding that some things in each school are working well and should be maintained, while other aspects of the school program can and should be improved. To maximize the positive impact of change, school and district administrators, teachers, parents and the larger community should carefully evaluate the current educational program, look at student outcomes to determine which aspects of the program need changing, plan change carefully with involvement from the entire educational community, and then evaluate the effects of changes on students over time. A thoughtful and well- planned action plan for school improvement will address the needs of every student in the school. As advocates for quality education for gifted and talented students, our involvement in the education reform movement will ensure that when change occurs, it is for the purpose of improving opportunities for *all* students, even those who are already achieving above grade level.

On the federal level, President Clinton has recently unveiled his education proposal, and it includes reauthorization of the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Program. Quotes from the proposal include sentiments that will be near and dear to the hearts of gifted advocates.

"...too often, schools fail to challenge students to do their best work, and students who are not challenged will not fully develop their talents, realize their potential, and learn to high standards."

"Schools must provide all students with important and challenging subject matter to study and encourage the habits of hard work."

"(schools should) engage students in learning and allow them to progress at their own pace."

President Clinton's proposal, if funded, would support schools who want to "demonstrate how strategies and programs identified for the education of gifted and talented students can be adapted and used to improve teaching and learning for all students in a school, and to help all students in a school develop their talents, realize their potential, and meet challenging performance standards, while not diminishing the curriculum and instruction for students traditionally identified as gifted and talented."

I do not know what went into the thinking behind this language; I do know that most legislation represents a compromise. I would have preferred to have the proposal address (and provide funding for) development of strategies and programs for gifted students as well

Catherine Barkett is the new Director for Gifted and Talented Education at the California Department of Education (CDE). She has a Masters in Education Administration from the University of California at Los Angeles and has worked as a consultant and administrator in the CDE for fifteen years. She may be reached at 916/657-3047.

as for adaptation to the entire school population. I know from my conversations with many of you that there are areas of the state where we are still struggling with how to best meet the needs of gifted and talented students, and we are not yet to a point where we have a successful program to export. On the other hand, I am relieved that gifted education is included in the bill, and I think the language is broad enough that it will allow local district administrators some discretion when they apply for funding (assuming there *is* funding).

I can't answer the question I have raised in the first paragraph of this article, but you can. You can do it by involving yourselves in the reform movement. You can do it through thoughtful analysis of proposed changes. You can do it by maintaining a focus on student outcomes: standards for student performance, measurement of progress towards those standards and evaluation of whether or not the program we have planned for students is teaching them what we want it to. You can do it by reminding your colleagues that the goal is not to ensure that every student reaches the same standard of performance. Instead, the goal is to ensure that all students reach competence in every subject *and* to ensure that each student is constantly striving to deepen his or her understanding, to improve performance and to pursue education as a lifelong goal.

GATE Points the Way in the Reform Movement: CAG's High School Demonstration Sites

by Ron Fontaine

Over the years, educators concerned with programs for the gifted have pointed the way in a number of innovative deliveries. In the late 1950s and through the 1960s, the advent of Sputnik stimulated a marked interest in math and science. Teachers of the gifted were leaders in the development of federal grants to rework curriculum in both fields. Researchers in gifted education also contributed significantly to the body of knowledge regarding learning styles in efforts to develop methods for identifying students in order to qualify them for gifted programs in the 1970s and 1980s

"In the 1990s, teachers of gifted education are again assuming a position of leadership."

In the 1990s, teachers of gifted education are again assuming a position of leadership. In the middle school/high school reform documents *Caught in the Middle* and *Second to None* California's schools are urged to develop a more demanding set of core classes around which a more rigorous thinking-and-meaning centered set of experiences will be planned. Many schools are grouping students into interdisciplinary clusters to deliver this reformed instructional effort. This departure from the traditional rather isolated series of individual subject area classes will be challenging to teachers who have not worked cooperatively with their colleagues from other disciplines. If this feature of the current reform effort is to succeed, specialized training or inservice for the targeted teachers must be provided.

The current effort by the California Association for the Gifted to provide demonstration sites for the delivery of differentiated curriculum allows teachers of gifted, core or any area of the instructional spectrum to observe valuable examples of a strong approach to interdisciplinary experiences. Two schools, Stockdale High and West High in Bakersfield, are entering their second year of providing demonstrations.

The design for delivering differentiated curriculum is based on the paper jointly developed by CAG and the California Department of Education. Primary contributors for CAG were Sandra Kaplan and Ron Fontaine; the department was represented by Fred Tempes, Barbara

Ron Fontaine is Director of Special Projects, Kern High School District, Bakersfield. He may be reached at 805/631-3109.

Brandes and Barbara Abbott. The resultant ideas, especially the concepts of depth, complexity, novelty and acceleration are featured in interdisciplinary themes organized by the teachers at Stockdale and West and carried out in special units of instruction which were featured in four separate visitation days at the two schools in the 1992–93 school year. Complemented by middle school efforts at Luther Burbank, Olive Peirce, Martin Luther King and a cluster of Ventura middle schools, CAG offers visitors to its demonstration sites clear examples of the concepts contained in the joint venture dealing with differentiated curriculum.

Both schools have concentrated their efforts within the 9-10 core curriculum in designated interdisciplinary GATE classes. West High instructors Joan Jacobs (English) and Caren Preston (social studies) were among the statewide group of twelve teachers who gathered in Ventura in July 1992 to select a theme around which specific units could be developed for use in grades 3 through 10. The theme chosen was conflict and the units developed are now being explained in a series of CAG sponsored teacher institutes held throughout the state. Jacobs and Preston are presenting the ideas they helped to develop at these workshops and they are demonstrating their own specific units to visitors who come to West High seeking ideas for delivering differentiated curriculum. In 1992–93 they were joined by West science instructor Laura Stockton. Stockton's creative integration of units allows students to observe the ecosystems which exist in a designated portion of their own back yards or any other outdoor space which can be observed over a period of time. Jacobs approached the broad theme of conflict in a study of English novels. Her units asking students to develop a party based on theses and ideas from the novel was received with enthusiasm by her visitors. Preston approaches conflict in world history with broad units focused on war and governmental change.

Stockdale's teachers dealt with conflict and force as themes in the 1992–93 school year. Scott Sullivan (social studies), Mike Griebling (science), and Ron Brown, Teri Smith and Lewis Gillham (English) spent many hours discussing their individual and collective thematic applications. They acknowledged frustration in the initial stages, but considerable ultimate satisfaction with the year's work. Griebling was successful with a study in science of the impact of a series of historical figures on the industrial revolution. The work was examined and used by both science and social studies classes. Students expressed surprise at Mr. Griebling's ventures into their class assignments for English and social studies. The teachers at Stockdale also organized a joint effort aimed at a comprehensive study of totalitarianism. Students were required to develop and prove an original thesis about totalitarianism which became a joint social studies/English project.

Teachers from both schools attended a week long workshop dealing with interdisciplinary instruction presented by Sandra Kaplan this past summer. Scott Sullivan remarks that there was an awareness on the part of the Stockdale group about how much more they can do in 1993–94. They and their West High colleagues are now planning for additional demonstration days to illustrate more instructional ideas dealing again with the broad theme of conflict and using the concepts from the paper on differentiated curriculum.

Information about CAG's teacher institutes may be acquired by calling 415/965-0653. The Stockdale and West demonstration dates will be coordinated by Helen Felton at Stockdale (805/665-2800) and Mike McCoy at West (805/832-2822.)

Quilts

Patches on a quilt.
Angles, triangles and squares.
Thread in bright colors hold them
together.
Colors in patterns.
Hands moving quickly up, down,
under and over the quilt.
Working fast.
Original, each one is different and
special in its own way.
Rags and scraps of cloth change
magically into a masterpiece.
Keepsakes treasured and kept
for all eternity.
Passed on from one generation to
The next.

Jessica Temple, Grade 7
Cabrillo Middle School, Ventura

The Seminar Program in the San Diego City Schools

by Betty Olson

San Diego has the most exemplary gifted and talented program in the country. No school district in the nation has anything comparable to the San Diego centers for the highly gifted. No city has such a concentration of highly gifted within its public school system.

The Gifted and Talented Education program in San Diego City Schools was initiated to explore effective ways of educating underachieving, bright students. As early as 1960 for the elementary level and 1966 for the secondary level, the program targeted underachieving, highly gifted students. The program has demonstrated that by meeting exceptional students' needs for differentiated education and counseling, their lives could be dramatically improved in school and out.

The seminar program in San Diego City Schools is open to students identified as highly gifted (the upper one-tenth of one percent as determined by an ability measure of intelligence, or so designated by a school site committee to be GATE certified students who would profit from a seminar setting). During the 1992–93 school year, San Diego City Schools served 1,352 highly gifted students in 32 regional centers, including eleven middle/junior high schools and five senior high schools, and two combined junior/senior high schools. In 1992–93 the class size was eighteen students. For the 1993–94 school year, enrollment per class will increase to twenty. An additional five secondary centers (middle and senior high schools) will be opened to serve students in those areas.

GATE teachers hold special certificates earned through a districtwide program of training, which uses the GATE Curriculum Framework as the basis for teacher training. The teacher training is a dynamic process which is evaluated and updated each year, and seminar teachers are an important part of this process.

As the seminar program's success became evident, attention was focused on the needs of other gifted students, and cluster programs were initiated at a majority of the district's school sites. Both the seminar and cluster programs have, over the years, reflected the changing district needs and the understanding of giftedness. San Diego's programs have met the major challenges of the changing and multifaceted views of intelligence, which cross all strata of society—racial/ethnic and economic. These needs have been nurtured accordingly.

The GATE Curriculum Framework, a major product of the GATE Five-Year Plan, provides goals for each of four specific areas, including content, process, product and learning environment. The Framework provides schools with models which can be combined to produce the most effective program for the students served, especially when the needs are diverse. Great emphasis has been placed on strategies and models which actively engage students in appropriately challenging tasks in order to develop independent, critical and higher order thinking skills, and encourage students to make use of knowledge and techniques in innovative ways—and this in a physical and emotional environment that recognizes multiple intelligences and learning styles.

"San Diego's programs have met the major challenges of the changing and multifaceted views of intelligence, which cross all strata..."

Seminar instruction at all levels takes place in small group settings, allowing for student-to-student interaction, as well as student-to-teacher interaction. Content adjustments follow the GATE Curriculum Framework in planning qualitatively differentiated curricula for gifted students at all sites.

Each year a catalog is published describing individual seminar programs at all participating schools. Each center covers the basic core curriculum; each center uses the GATE Curriculum Framework and follows the UC a-f admission requirements. However, some centers offer a special emphasis, a special focus in their programs. For example, one secondary seminar center offers a math-computer-science emphasis, another a humanities approach, another may specialize in foreign language and linguistics, and yet another has a fine arts and performing arts emphasis. This provides the

seminar students with many options in planning their secondary education program. It also allows for exploration of possibilities based on the individual student's interests and talents.

The secondary seminar program provides many unique opportunities for all seminar students. Among them are 1) the Judges Outreach Program, which allows students to meet with judges from the Ninth Circuit Appeals Court to participate in discussions on constitutional law and the judicial organization of the country; 2) the Academic Decathlon which gives students a chance to participate in an all-day college-bowl type academic event where they are competing with students throughout the country; 3) the Academic League, based on a sports format with weekly competitions among four leagues in the district and ending with a final competition with winning teams from each league; 4) the Honor Seminars of San Diego which provides outstanding juniors and seniors with the opportunity to learn from and interact with highly qualified professional people from the community.

Advanced Placement classes (some 250 sections in all San Diego high schools) are an important part of the GATE program and are used by the secondary students. One of the largest AP programs in existence, these classes give college-bound students a challenging curriculum with the opportunity to earn advanced college standing.

The Community Resources for Programmatic Augmentation provides program offerings for students in GATE classes, with special consultants in the program having designed programs for the seminar students, both elementary and secondary. The choices are wide and varied for all GATE classes and are provided by community consultants in the San Diego metropolitan area. They offer special talents and skills in a variety of fields of interest and experience, talents not readily available in regular classroom activities.

Community and parental involvement in the seminar program in San Diego have been two very important factors in its success. Last year the first annual Seminar Fair was held at Clairemont High School in February. The Fair was planned by seminar teachers with input from students (elementary and secondary), parents and community. It was attended by more than 1,600 seminar students, parents and siblings. There were 69 workshop sessions presented by students, by parents and by community members showcasing the interests, the talents and the creativity of the highly gifted. The Fair was, as the students commented, "Awesome!" Plans are now under way for the second annual Seminar Fair to be held on February 26, 1994, at Clairemont High School.

"A successful program doesn't just happen, it is brought about by dedicated teachers and parental and community support."

A successful program doesn't just happen, it is brought about by dedicated teachers and parental and community support. Above all, the success of seminar program can be attributed to the dedication of Dr. David P. Hermanson. His exemplary leadership and commitment to excellence has made it all possible. He has consistently encouraged teachers to allow for individual projects, to teach concepts rather than facts, to bring students in contact with maximum talent and to follow the general philosophy of truth as something to be sought rather than revealed.

Perhaps the greatest tribute to our program comes from one it served. The following comes from a seminar student's reflection on her education, as it was given on her college application.

"...But it is the sense of community in the Seminar Program that has been the most effective catalyst in my acceptance of self and others. As Seminar students, we live and work together so closely that each of knows the trials ands tribulations the others suffer; we can sympathize and console. This common experience creates deep bonds of friendship. We are not solely a group of intellectuals attempting to unearth truths of literature and science, but we are individuals discovering the truths of ourselves and growing together.

The search for truth of self has been my chief interest during the past three years. However terrifying leading seminars has been, teaching myself has proved far more difficult. Before I could take advantage of the opportunities for independent study, I had to learn how to learn. Several years of facts thrust into my ears and squeezed out through my pen had dulled my enthusiasm and motivation. I have had to redefine my values; to cease working for grades and begin working for my own enjoyment and enlightenment. This metamorphosis has been spurred by a deep desire to know myself and develop my individuality. The Seminar Program has nurtured my growth through tolerance of and attention to my individual needs. And, although I was not immediately able to exploit the flexibility of curriculum, the program eventually provided my incipient individuality with the freedom to expand.

The Seminar Program has provided all the necessary equipment for my expeditions through my internal world. In beginning to understand myself, I am gradually answering my questions of education. This progression can be a frustrating and painful one, requiring a process of deep meditation that would never have been possible in a mind-numbing system of force-fed education."

Betty Olson is a retired Seminar teacher. Dr. David Hermanson, the director of Gifted and Talented Education for the San Diego City Schools can be reached at 1775 Chatsworth Blvd., San Diego, 92107.

Accelerated College Entrance: The Benefits of ACE

By Terry A. Thomas, Ph.D.

He was quite a bit shorter than the other students in his class, but they looked up to him anyway.

Aaron Shek was only 12 when he took his first calculus class at California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) through the Accelerated College Entrance (ACE) Program. This seventh grader was ready and able to begin university studies in mathematics, but he also had a full day at his middle school. Aaron's high aptitude and interest in mathematics were being enhanced at college while he took regular seventh grade classes with his agemates. Aaron was the youngest student ever to enroll in classes at CSUS, but despite his age, he seemed to fit in well with his university classmates. He could handle the work and the other students chatted with him and occasionally asked for his help on problems. Since his first experience with university mathematics classes, Aaron has been able to take more advanced mathematics courses, accumulating an impressive college record prior to his high school graduation.

The ACE program at CSUS was initiated in response to the CSU Executive Order Number 461 approved by the Board of Trustees in 1985. This executive order was designed "...to assist high schools in meeting the needs of gifted students, and to expand CSU efforts to encourage more able students from under-represented groups to participate in special programs... ." A major provision of the executive order was to reduce fees for these students to an absolute minimum.

The ACE Center at CSUS was established in 1985 to give pre-college students the opportunity to study subjects which are not available to them in their regular schools. Qualified students take courses at CSUS each semester provided they maintain good academic standing with both the university and their regular school. Students must meet established test score and grade point standards as well as obtain recommendations from their school, their parents and the ACE director. The total cost to ACE students for admission and registration is $5 per semester. Credits earned can apply toward a degree program at CSUS or may be transferred to other universities.

Since 1985, almost 300 students have participated in the ACE program on campus. These students successfully completed university courses in a wide variety of disciplines, including:

Accounting	Government
Anthropology	History
Art	Home Economics
Astronomy	Humanities
Biology	Japanese
Business	Latin
Chemistry	Logic & Critical Thinking
Computer Science	Math
Criminal Justice	Music
Debate	Philosophy
Drama	Photography
Economics	Physical Education
Engineering	Psychology
English	Russian
Ethnic Studies	Sociology
French	Spanish
Geography	Statistics
German	

In the eight years of operation, the ACE center has kept track of its former students through follow-up questionnaires and occasional interviews. In August 1993, a survey questionnaire was sent to former ACE students who had attended CSUS during the years 1989 to 1991. These students were mailed a questionnaire at their last known address. A total of 42 completed questionnaires were returned from an original mailing of 130 surveys. The return rate of 32% was low, but follow-up mailings will increase the data yield. A preliminary examination of the responses provides some tentative findings that seem justified. Overall these students felt that the ACE experiences were extremely valuable to them. Among the benefits cited by these former students were: admission to prestigious universities, academic acceleration, increased self-awareness, continuing achievement and challenging career choices.

University Admissions

While a third of these students elected to attend CSUS, the other students were admitted to some of the most selective universities in the country. Students felt that their record of achievement at CSUS contributed significantly to their admission into some "big name schools"

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such as Stanford, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, MIT, CalTech, Harvey Mudd, Reed, UC Berkeley and others. Having a record of success in university studies prior to high school graduation tends to make a positive impression on university admissions officers.

Academic Acceleration

Earning university credits which were transferrable had some real advantages. Some students were advanced in class standing based on their ACE credits. Not only were students able to move into more advanced classes sooner, they received the obvious financial benefit these units represented. There was no indication that students suffered from "holes in their knowledge" or that they lost interest in their disciplines due to exposure to the faster paced instruction found in CSUS classes. This form of academic acceleration contributed to their academic achievement in high school and college.

Self-Awareness

Many students reported that they grew in self-confidence through the ACE program. They realized that they could be successful in university work, and that they were not "strange" for wanting to learn, even when this motivation was not shared by their agemates. These students experienced an environment where it was OK to be bright and to want to work hard at school.

Achievement

The experience at CSUS facilitated a smooth transition between high school and full-time university work. Most students attributed, at least partially, their achievements to their early experience in ACE. Former ACE students continued to demonstrate excellence as evidenced by high school and university grades and test scores.

Career Preferences

ACE students reported challenging career choices, which were based on early experiences in academic disciplines. Students indicated a satisfaction with the choices they made and felt good about their progress toward these goals. Students had a clear view of where they wanted to be in the four years following undergraduate studies.

Comments

Given an opportunity to comment on the importance of their ACE experiences, these former ACE students spoke of ACE in glowing terms after an interval of four years.

"I had so many units, I had to get an extension to stay in school the full four years."

"ACE gave me confidence in my academic ability as well as my social skills. At an early age I learned how exciting college coursework would be."

"ACE showed me that the work levels required at the high school level are a joke compared to college. The university I attend now (Johns Hopkins) is even harsher than CSUS. For the major I'm taking, the expectations are unbelievably high and so is the work load."

"I am able to tell employers I attended college courses while in high school. Having college experience before actually attending college helped me a lot after I graduated from high school."

"ACE taught me I have the ability to succeed in academia."

"The experience was extremely positive. ACE along with AP credits have allowed me to acquire a B.S. degree in three rather than four years. The program is not for everyone, but it was beneficial to me. Thank you."

"ACE courses were a great start, and I was able to get used to college classes at a young age. I learned the self discipline needed to succeed in college work."

"It showed that I could do college-level work, and it kept me interested in education. It allowed me to graduate early from high school."

"ACE gave me more confidence going into college knowing I had succeeded in my ACE classes while in high school. It was great to have those units when I started college."

"I took mostly math courses through the ACE program and that experience motivated me to major in mathematics and to continue graduate studies in mathematics."

"After finishing undergraduate work at Harvard, I hope to attend medical school and eventually specialize in sports medicine. I believe my experience during high school helped me make the transition to college-level classes. ACE was a definite asset to my survival."

" I owe everything to the ACE program! I benefitted greatly from the experience. Thank you so much for the opportunity."

"I really enjoyed it because I was tired of high school, but didn't want to graduate early. "

"I tested out of a full year of mathematics classes."

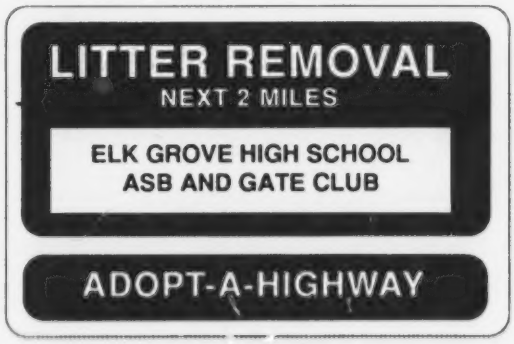
"ACE was an excellent program that has really helped me at Berkeley. It made it much easier for me to adjust to a college life/environment. It also helped me gain essential study habits and social skills."

Aaron Shek is now a junior in high school. He is a little taller than he was in the seventh grade, but he is still on the short side. He enjoys sports, extracurricular activities, and yes, even his classes at high school. The fact that he knows more mathematics than his classmates, perhaps more than his high school mathematics faculty, does not interfere with Aaron's association with his peers. He has found employment as a mathematics teaching assistant during the summer school at CSUS, and he serves as a tutor in his high school's study center. After high school graduation, Aaron definitely plans on college, but he isn't sure where. He should have several options.

Community and School Service - Another Challenge for Gifted/Talented Students

by Sharon Freitas

When developing the legislation to create California's Gifted and Talented Education Program, (AB 1040 Mangers, 1979) both parents and educators expressed concerns about how to address the social-emotional development of bright, young students. Sometimes within the accelerated academic program, the individual is overlooked, especially if the student is a very bright, sensitive child who may not have a healthy self-concept. Because the child excels in one or more academic areas, the teacher does not notice that he is quiet, withdrawn or often isolated on the playground. Research provides many profiles of such youngsters whose social-emotional development needs are not being met by the school. The four elements that resulted in Education Code 52200 provide for experiences that must be a part of every GATE program. These elements call for activities and opportunities to develop:



- sensitivity and responsibility to others
- a commitment to constructive ethical standards
- realistic, healthy self-concepts
- self-generating problem-solving abilities to expand choices

Later research from noted educators in the field of gifted education continued to reinforce the need to require educational programs to include elements and activities that would enhance the development of the "whole" child. Getzels (1981) stated, "Talents anciently thought virtuous: the talent to love, to understand, to empathize, to be compassionate, to be of service to others...they need as any other to be discovered and encouraged."

A. Harry Passow, in a paper delivered to the Fourth World Conference on Gifted and Talented Children in Montreal, stated: "...there is a specialized curriculum consisting of engagements which provide the individual with learning opportunities needed to nurture his/her talents. It is here that potential scientists, musicians, poets, humanitarians, and other gifted/talented individuals begin nurturing those skills, knowledge, insights, modes of thinking and behaviors which will enable him/her **(given the opportunity)** to make outstanding contributions to society which, at the same time, are personally rewarding."

So, what can an educator do to meet the requirements of the legislation and also help these special students to reach for the goals stated in the elements? Community and school service are one of the answers, as many GATE students in the Elk Grove USD high schools are finding out.

One such program at a very large high school involves a counselor who has established a group called the GATE club. With more than 140 volunteer members, many different activities are offered throughout the year. One is the "Adopt-A-Highway" program where students are trained by the California Department of Transportation, provided safety clothing and equipment, and spend one afternoon a month actually cleaning up the shoulder of the freeway near their school. A sign is posted that declares that this section of highway, approximately two miles, is being taken care of by the GATE Club of Elk Grove High School. This is not only a service to the environment but great public relations for the GATE program and the local high school.

Another choice for students to serve their community is the "Convalescent Hospital Visitations" program. Being a buddy to a senior citizen or doing activities with the elderly help the students to become more aware of the needs of others as well as providing real service. Making a commitment to visit regularly, at

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least once a month, is in itself a demonstration of developing responsibility towards others as the education code describes.

These types of activities, of course, are not the answer for all GATE students. Some, after a short experience doing such tasks, find that they are even more eager to continue their progress toward a college education just to avoid such work experiences when they enter the real world.

Another high school in the urban part of the district also sponsors a GATE Club on campus. The main difference is that this school is located in a very different socio-economic community. The students come from many different ethnic groups and from homes that may be in need of assistance themselves. Under the direction of a very dedicated English A/P teacher, the members of the GATE Club run the school store in order to raise funds for trips to colleges as part of their post-secondary planning. Many of the students involved have never been on a college campus and do not have the means to travel on their own or with their families to visit a college campus. Some of them have even been accepted by colleges without ever having seen the campus or even having a very clear idea of what a college looks like. Having this opportunity to work on campus in order to fund college visitation trips is definitely a great example of the fourth element, self-generating problem solving to expand choices.

At this high school, community service projects such as volunteering once a month at the "Loaves and Fishes" soup kitchen or washing dishes and helping to clean up after a holiday meal at a local mission are also part of the GATE Club activity.

It is a challenge for GATE coordinators and/or teachers to be aware of when and how to provide the right activity to include one or more of these elements. The key factor that makes both of these GATE Club programs work is the dedication of the staff person involved. Without an educator who makes time available before, during or after the school day, many GATE students just go through the paces. Having the opportunity to do community and school service adds to the element of personal and social growth for these students and builds a feeling of self-esteem and confidence in their ability to make a real difference in the world.

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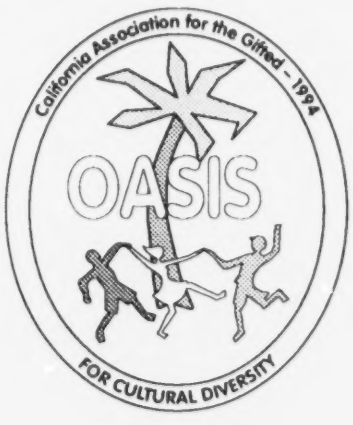

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The Orange County High School of the Arts

by Ralph Opa

The Orange County High School of the Arts was established in the fall of 1987 to offer pre-professional training in the arts to high school students who demonstrate talent or potential in the areas of dance, musical theatre, visual arts, instrumental music and technical theatre. It has blossomed into Southern California's premier arts school with over four hundred students taking advantage of this unique educational opportunity. Students need not be Orange County residents to audition; in fact, some students have come to the Orange County High School of the Arts from out of state.

Complementing their arts studies, students are enrolled in academic course work at Los Alamitos High School which has been recognized by the State Department of Education as a Distinguished California High School and by the United States Department of Education as a National Exemplary School. Honors and advanced placement courses are offered. Arts classes are purposely scheduled from 2:00 to 6:00 daily to ensure that students can continue to meet their graduation requirements while enrolled in the specialized arts program.

Programs

Classical dance. The principal aim of the classical dance department is to prepare its students for professional careers in all aspects and disciplines of performing, choreographing and teaching. Courses are offered in ballet, modern dance and jazz technique. Pointe, variation, supported adagio, ethnic dance, musical theory, ballroom dancing, pilates, dance history and ballet terminology are included in the classical dance curriculum. Students have the opportunity to perform at several concerts throughout the year, one of which is devoted solely to student choreography.

Commercial dance. The commercial dance program has been created to complement the classical dance program and expose students to current dance forms. Essential dance forms such as ballet, tap, modern and street dancing integrated into the program to offer a br course of study for dancers desiring to dev the skills to dance on Broadway and in Ho wood. Opportunities for performing cho graphic works created by professionals rently working in the commercial music in try as well as by fellow students are avail throughout the year.

Instrumental music. The Orange Co High School of the Arts is privileg have the Pacific Symphony Youth chestra in residence. A chamber chestra and a wind ensemble also part of the instrumental sic department. Each of groups performs throu the year both on t ange County High of the Arts campus and throu the Southern California comm In addition, training is offered termediate and advanced piano instrument group, music h music theory and symphon ture.

Musical theater. The four of the musical theatre lum are history and te Students are exposed to the history of cal theatre, acting styles and in-depth classical drama, Shakespeare and mod wrights. Students may major in either drama. However, all students are r participate in acting, voice and dan regardless of their major course of st tionally, students are able to take electi in many areas including mime, impro recording techniques, comedy, playw recting, commercial acting technique dition procedures. Four mainstage pr and numerous smaller productions sented to the public during each pe season.

Technical theater. The technical th gram provides students with fundam and practical experience in all aspect cal production. With the guidance sionals in the industry, students rec on training in set design and constru

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ing, sound, video production and stage and house management. The Orange County High School of the Arts theatre houses over forty productions each year, and technical theatre students are responsible for all of them. The experience of such a rigorous schedule presents a tremendous opportunity to master the skills of theatrical production.

Visual arts. The visual arts program stresses teaching students to think of themselves as artists. Courses are offered in drawing, painting, ceramics, sculpture, design, fibers, photography, jewelry, printmaking, computer graphics, murals, animation and art history. In addition, students continually work toward the presentations of bi-annual art shows which, in the past, have been hung in such venues as the Richard Nixon Library, Orange Coast College, Rancho Santiago College and the Bowers Museum.

Unique Features

The curriculum of the Orange County High School of the Arts differs from other programs in scope, intensity, expected student performance and levels of instruction. Orange County High School of the Arts training is intended to prepare students for entrance into universities or arts institutes or for entry-level work in the arts arena. All courses were developed with input from colleges, universities, art institutes and agencies and professional artists.

High expectations. A very important factor that differentiates Orange County High School of the Arts opportunities in art education from existing nonspecialized programs is in the type of instruction offered. Expectations of the professional instructors in the program are high, and the fact that students have responded very positively to the demands made of them is evidenced in the quality of their productions and their enthusiastic attitude.

Professional artist-teachers. There are presently sixty full- and part-time professional artist-teachers at the Orange County High School of the Arts who provide pre-professional instruction in their specialty areas. An important factor that differentiates the resulting arts education program from nonspecialized programs in other high schools is the practice of bringing in specialists in specific areas of arts education. While certificated teachers can offer a general arts education, the Orange County High School of the Arts artist-teachers can provide an in-depth, detailed exposure to each subject area.

Members of the Orange County High School of the Arts teaching staff hold master's degrees or equivalent honors or credentials in their respective fields. More important, they are all currently working professionals and are able to give students not only a well-rounded education in the basic fundamentals, but also a realistic "hands-on" look at the current requirements for success in the industry. The cumulative background of the instructors includes, but is not limited to, performing, dancing, choreographing, directing and designing for the major stages in Los Angeles and New York; national and international tours; and experience in film, radio and television. Artist-teachers have included Bebe Neuwirth, Emmy award winner; David Allan, Bella Lewitsky and Loretta Livingston, internationally known choreographers; Clair Weeks, Disney animator; and Scott Ellis, Broadway director.

Professional arts organizations support and input. The Orange County High School of the Arts enjoys the support and advisory input of many arts agencies and professional arts organizations. These arts partnerships provide master classes, guest lectures, field trips, internships, tours, performances, facility use and curriculum planning. Some of these support agencies include the Joffrey Ballet, Disney Studios, the Orange County Philharmonic Society, Bowers Museum, the Long Beach Symphony, the Paul Taylor Dance Company, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Long Beach Civic Light Opera, the Pacific Symphony, the Bella Lewitsky Dance Company, the San Francisco Ballet, and IATSE, the Theatre Technical Union. In addition, many colleges and universities have aligned with the Orange County High School of the Arts to provide enrichment offerings and support for students. They include New York University, the Boston Conservatory of Music, the Manhattan School of Music, the University of Southern California, U.C.L.A., UC Irvine, California State University (Long Beach), California State University (Fullerton), Rancho Santiago College, Chapman University and Cypress College.

Industry and community support. The Orange County High School of the Arts Foundation was established in November 1988 as a nonprofit corporation whose specific purpose is to raise funds necessary for the continuing support of the Orange County High School of the Arts through corporate donations, grants, small business sponsorships, parent/community support and special events. The Foundation raises over $300,000 annually, partially through the sup-

port of such corporations as GTE California, the Ronald McDonald Children's Charities, Technics/Panasonic, McDonnell Douglas, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc., Northrop Corporation, Southern California Edison, Yamaha Corporation of America, Los Alamitos Medical Center, Fender Musical Instruments, Home Bank and Young Chang Pianos. Significant financial support has also come from foundations such as the Leo Freedman Foundation, the Orange County Community Foundation, the Smith-Walker Foundation, the Margaret E. Oser Foundation and the Robert Gumbiner Foundation.

Outcomes

The real success of the Orange County High School of the Arts is determined by the growth in the lives of the students while in the program and by their future successes, whether in college, career or life in general. As the reputation of the Orange County High School of the Arts grows, its students are increasingly being accepted into and receiving scholarships to the country's most prestigious art institutes and institutes of higher education.

Orange County High School of the Arts students and alumni are also already making their marks on the professional arts industry. An OCHSA student will have the leading role when *Beauty and the Beast* goes to Broadway next year. OCHSA students have been featured in such films as *Hook*, *Newsies*, *The Addams Family* and *Kindergarten Cop*. An OCHSA student was featured in the national tour of *Bye Bye Birdie*. OCHSA students have had lead or recurring roles in numerous televison shows and they have been seen in prestigious regional theatres across the country, including the St. Louis Municipal Opera, Atlanta Civic Light Opera, Philadelphia Light Opera and South Coast Repertory Theatre. OCHSA students now dance with the Joffrey Ballet, the San Francisco Ballet and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. They have also toured with Paula Abdul and appeared in videos with Michael Jackson and Tina Turner.

The Orange County High School of the Arts, in short, has created a safe and supportive environment where promising young artists can interact with a peer group that shares their artistic, creative passion. It has increased the self-esteem of these young people by helping them discover their talents and develop their artistic abilities to their full potential. Last, by exposing these talented students to all areas of fine arts, it is building not only the artists but the arts audiences of the future.

I'm Just the Right...

I'm just the right age to write
deep purple poems
that bloom from my brain
like flowers in the
morning sun.

I'm just the right girl to
float through the sky
on a bed of frosted
white clouds.

I'm just the right stone
to be skipped
over white, blue and green
waves that the
ocean god knows.

I'm just the right age
to see sorrow
in an invisible way.

I'm just the right person to
look in an attic
filled with treasures
of delicious
times
and hear the echo
of long ago.

I'm just the right age to write
deep purple poems...

Jennifer Eason, Grade 8
DeAnza Middle School, Ventura

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AP Classes in a Rural High School? No Problem!

by Tim Guzik

Teaching gifted students in small, isolated, rural communities offers many challenges and requires new approaches both inside and outside the classroom in order to develop a successful program. Most parents in rural communities are very supportive of establishing classes for their children that enable their youngsters to compete academically with the larger urban schools. The Advanced Placement program provides the kind of academic rigor that challenges both teachers and students to achieve at the highest levels of the academic and cognitive domains. The AP program has national recognition and is held in high esteem by colleges and universities throughout the country.

It might be thought that establishing a program would be a fairly easy task due to its high credibility and reputation for quality. However, rural schools have small enrollments, and this creates difficulty in scheduling new classes. Parents and students need to be educated about the benefits, challenges and obstacles of the program so that adequate resources can be redirected from already existing programs.

The first step to take when developing a program is to meet with the teaching staff and identify teachers who have an interest in developing a class. Next, it is important to attend a school board meeting and present the program to them for their support and approval. The third step is to begin the process of educating parents and community groups to establish the enthusiasm and confidence that is necessary for the program to succeed.

I am now in my seventh year teaching AP United States history at Del Norte High School in Crescent City. The success and reputation of the program has grown each year and now has a considerable following of students and parents who have a personal interest in the continuation and success of the program. Over the last few years I have seen many advantages of the AP program that make it an important consideration when making curriculum decisions for gifted students.

1. Because the program is national, it gives gifted students in isolated areas the knowledge and confidence that their skill level and subject matter knowledge are commensurate with that of any student in the country.
2. Universities and colleges hold the AP program in high esteem because the curriculum has national standards and emphasizes critical thinking, writing and solid subject matter requirements. This allows gifted students from small schools in isolated areas to compete on an equal footing with students from urban areas for admission to major universities.
3. Many rural communities are economically depressed. The AP program enables gifted students from low socioeconomic families to make substantial savings in college costs, since students who successfully pass the AP exam receive college as well as high school credit for taking the class. A dedicated student can complete as much as a year of college while in high school.
4. Confidence, companionship and positive self-esteem are some of the obvious psychic rewards. Students develop a special closeness and spirit of cooperation because they are all working toward achieving the goal of passing the AP exam in May.
5. Gifted students who are planning to attend the University of California system, where they are required to take achievement tests, show significantly higher results on the history portion of the exam when they are compared to students in standard history classes.
6. The gifted students in my AP class who take the Golden State exam in history consistently score in the honors and high honors range.
7. Most of my students who have gone on to major universities around the country have reported the advantages of the expository writing and critical thinking skills they learned in the class.

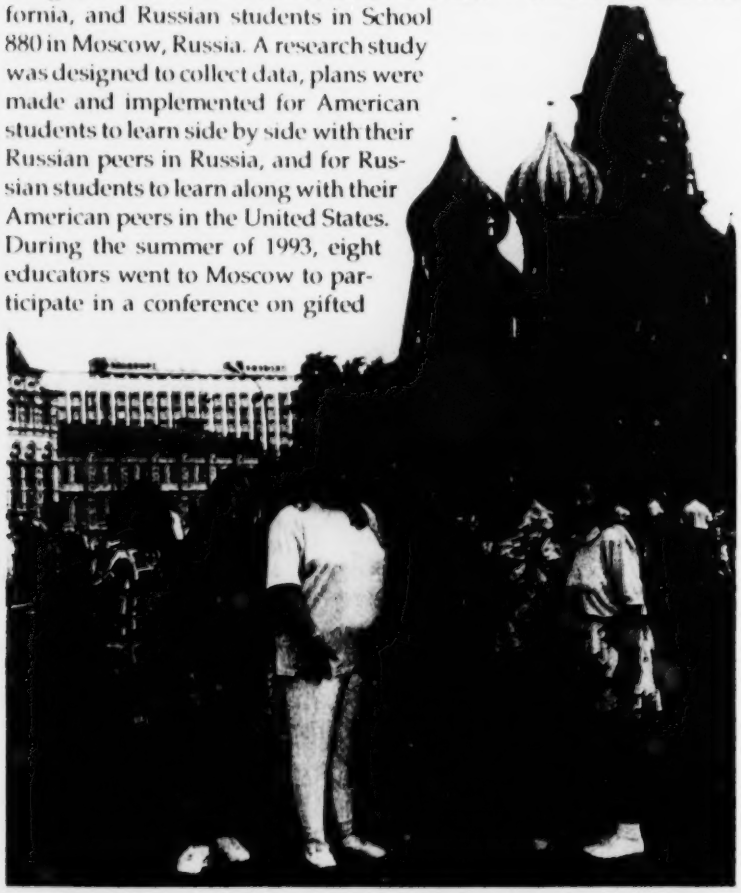
The success of this program has convinced me that gifted students in rural communities need the support of teachers, parents and administrators to develop curriculum options such as the Advanced Placement program which enables students to reach their full potential as students and as human beings.

Tim Guzik may be reached at Del Norte High School, 707/464-6141.

Visiting a Gifted Program in Moscow

by Sandra Kaplan, Melanie Crawford, Katherine Gustin and Victoria Steinitz

In 1988, an International Curriculum project was initiated to determine how gifted students in the United States and Russia would react to the same differentiated thematic interdisciplinary curriculum. The project included American gifted students in Texas, Hawaii and California, and Russian students in School 880 in Moscow, Russia. A research study was designed to collect data, plans were made and implemented for American students to learn side by side with their Russian peers in Russia, and for Russian students to learn along with their American peers in the United States. During the summer of 1993, eight educators went to Moscow to participate in a conference on gifted education and the differentiated thematic interdisciplinary curriculum. The conference included Americans and teachers from Russia and other republics of the former Soviet Union. Each of the American educators conducted a session during the conference, and some of them demonstrated lessons with classes of Russian children.



Evelyn Taramae, Jennifer Gould, Melanie Crawford, Victoria Steinitz, Sandy Kaplan and Katherine Gustin

During the five years of this project, many changes have occurred in Russia that have influenced the project and the work of the principal investigators, Sandra Kaplan from the United States and Natasha Schumakova from Russia. The Russian Department of Education sanctioned the formation of a school for gifted children which would be devoted to the thematic interdisciplinary curriculum and differentiation of the core curriculum. A population of 125 gifted students attend this public school. The major fiscal support for the school is the government. However, parents and a business partner augment this support. The gifted students at this school are bound by standardized achievement tests and a national curriculum, but they also experience a thematic interdisciplinary curriculum that differentiates the core curriculum. Teachers in Russia are using the same thematic interdisciplinary curriculum which has been developed to differentiate learning for American gifted students. The students in both countries have studied *change, order, influences* and *power*. This year's theme is *adaptation*.

The major objective of the five-year study has been to examine the similarities and differences between the perceptions of gifted American and Russian students toward these principles of differentiation:

- Learning about an important and big idea that includes many less important ideas. (thematic/interdisciplinary curriculum)
- Learning about the same topic in different content areas.
- Having people who are experts judge or criticize student work.
- Learning to share information the student has researched in new and different ways.

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- Learning about new discoveries throughout the world.
- Learning about ideas that conflict or do not agree.
- Using different kinds of resources to find out something.
- Learning that studying one problem can lead to other problems for study.
- Learning how to solve a problem independently.
- Finding out how a person learns.
- Learning to be a leader.
- Using what is learned to help others.
- Learning how to evaluate or judge your own work.
- Learning that there are many different and right answers to the same problem.

Four attributes of perception defined by John Goodlad in his 1978 publication, *A Place Called School*, were used to define the students' perceptions toward the curriculum: difficulty, interest, importance and usefulness. The results from the study are extensive. Following are some of the findings.

1. Regardless of the item posed to the students on the questionnaire, American students agreed that the differentiated thematic interdisciplinary curriculum was not difficult. However, the Russian students consistently perceive the same curriculum as difficult.

One explanation of these results could be that American students believe that the difficulty of a task is correlated with intellectual capacity. If a student admits a task is difficult, that student may also feel that he is tacitly admitting that he is not an advanced or gifted learner. For some students, boasting about the ease of a task allows them to engage in the task without anxiety and without the pressure to achieve "like a gifted student." For some students, stating that a task is difficult is an expression of "need." The Russian students' statements that the tasks were difficult proceeded from their belief that "hard" work and "good" or "smart" students are synonymous terms. The Russian students expect school to require effort and they equate hard work with academic success. Acknowledgment of a task's difficulty reaffirmed their perceptions of themselves as good students.

2. Learning to be a leader and the development of interpersonal ability is integral to the differentiated thematic interdisciplinary curriculum. This was perceived by the Russians as difficult. Russian and American students agreed that this task was important and interesting; however, American students believed that the curricular experience was useful, while Russian students perceived little use for this same experience. This task brought out significant differences between the two cultures. Before the spread of the democratic system of government and the growth of a market economy in Russia, students did not view leadership skills as valuable or necessary. Interpersonal activities continue to play only a secondary role in the Russian curriculum today.

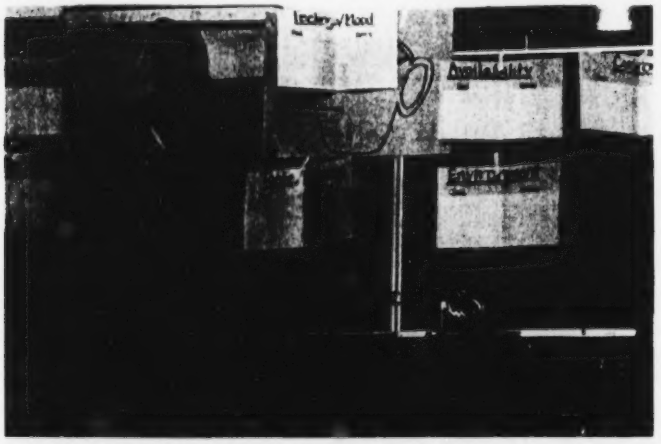
Russian students are serious learners. Beyond the wrinkled brows and quizzical gazes typical of gifted students everywhere when confronted with a complex problem, the Russian students ponder their solutions, incorporate sophisticated knowledge into their responses and challenge their peers' answers. The students are formal in their approach and response to learning. They raise their hands to participate in a discussion, stand when they present an idea and use formal language when they speak in class.

No differences in culture when it comes to line dancing taught to Russian students by Melanie Crawford.

The greatest contrast between Russian and American gifted students, however, seems to be the extensive and advanced knowledge base of the Russian students and their self-directed attitude toward learning. It must be said that the Russian students seem better educated than

their American peers.

While it would be inappropriate to generalize about all Russian students from observation of the gifted students at School 880, the American visitors agreed that there was an innocence about these students that is not seen in their American counterparts. They have retained a childlike attitude and sense of wonder toward learning, even though their thinking processes, their vocabulary and their fund of knowledge is more sophisticated than that of American students. Some teachers felt that this innocence was a consequence of a more sheltered environment that has only recently been invaded by MTV, video games and other trappings of material success. A Department of Education official responsible for curriculum and instruction for all Russian schools commented that achievement scores of Russian children in the last two years had dropped substantially from the scores of previous years. He feels that the introduction of Western cultural ideas has had a negative impact on Russian children and their learning. It could also be suggested that the unsettled political and cultural conditions in Russia during the last few years has had serious consequences for students as well as adults.



Katherine Gustin teaches a thematicic interdisciplinary lesson.

The Russian students performed a concert for the American visitors. The exhibition of talent was most impressive. Like children in the United States, Russian children have access to a variety of private music, dance and art lessons. However, the Russian children also have access to community supported after-school and Saturday lessons and experiences. Originally developed as Pioneer Palaces and supported by the government, these centers are now privately operated by local educators. The Creative Center offers classes in drama, music, dance and art as well as science, sewing, shipbuilding and plant care. This extracurricular support of the arts enhances the importance of these areas and provides the students with experiences beyond those included in the core curriculum of the school. Talent development is valued and evidence of this was seen in the level of student skill and ease of performance during the concert. Student art, which was displayed in the corridors of the school and the center, was of exceptionally high quality. The Russian teachers exhibited collegiality beyond that usually found among teachers in American schools. Perhaps this is because most teachers live in their school community, and their personal and professional lives are more closely linked than is usual in American schools. The teachers at the Constellation School for the Gifted don't perceive their responsibilities to the students and the school community as an 8 to 4 o'clock assignment. These teachers are committed to the goals of the school, to their colleagues and to their students as a major part of their lives, not just as a job. One American visitor felt that the close relationships among the Russian teachers is a result of their acceptance that being a teacher means being involved fully in the school, in the daily life of the community and in the lives of their students and their families. One American teacher noted that Russian teachers seem to care for their students as parents care for their own children. The Russian culture values its children, and this is reflected in the interaction of teachers with the community and their students.

Perhaps the greatest similarity between American and Russian teachers was the kinds of problems both groups are concerned about solving. As one American teacher stated in surprise, "They're as worried about how to work with gifted children and their parents as we are!" The Russian teachers were very interested in how we conduct classes, write curriculum and work with parents, and they asked the same kind of questions that all teachers ask each other when they discuss education. There are universal concerns and interests that unite all teachers across cultures and distance.

TECHNET

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words (Camcorders in the Classroom)

by Diana R. Alford

My interest in video production began during a teacher visitation to another middle school. I observed a classroom where students were actually excited about current events. Cooperative "news teams" and videotaping engaged these students in what was otherwise an admittedly unpopular topic. My students would rather watch paint dry than learn about current events.

Our school didn't own a camcorder, so with my principal's support, I wrote a proposal to our PTSA, who promptly granted the request. My technophobia disappeared when I discovered it took only about an hour to figure out how to use the camera. My students had the mechanics down in about ten minutes. The actual techniques of shooting took longer, but they found them enjoyable to learn and fun to practice.

The creation and videotaping of a news broadcast proved to me that it was possible to have students report on more than sports and the latest "R" rated movies. They enjoyed working in crews (another name for cooperative groups), and since everyone had a specific task to perform in order for the broadcast to be a success, they exhibited more responsibility with their assigned tasks, less slacking off, and fewer instances of letting one crew member do all the work.

I soon noticed other benefits I hadn't observed in the school visitation. Videotaping the presentations and then watching them offered students immediate feedback on their presentation skills. They soon became acutely aware of not only *what* they presented but *how* they presented. With video, presentation skills improved much faster than if we just discussed the presentations in class. They began to hear me when I mentioned that news anchors do not chew gum, wear hats, or roll their eyes. Topics such as voice speed, voice tone, voice clarity (some still found it difficult to talk through the rubber bands and retainers of middle school) took on a new meaning for students as they watched themselves race through a piece while no one in the audience could understand a word they said.

Kaye Black's *Kid Vid* opened for us the world of technical video production. We talked about types of shots and their use. We began to use storyboards and scripts in class. We experimented with video in other areas of the curriculum. Our productions took on a more professional appearance as we began using the technical language of video production. Scripting and storyboarding brought out new talents in my students which I hadn't previously observed. Visualizing a finished production was an important skill, and writing original scripts proved more difficult than just creating an article from two or three sources. Drawing for storyboards created a demand for artistic ability, often provided by those students ordinarily less than interested in writing.

I began to tape during other classroom activities. I noticed student behavior always improved with the camera in the room, even if it was off. I taped them working in groups and we talked about proper groupwork etiquette. Sometimes I let the camera run while I was presenting material to improve my own presentation skills. They began to ask, "Are we going to tape this assignment?" Taping any project improved the quality by at least 50%, even if we never watched the tape.

We branched out in our projects, and we were thrilled when a local TV station came out and did a piece on the video we created for the troops in the Persian Gulf. Our class had a video

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pal class in Australia. I offered the opportunity for students to create projects with the school camcorder or with their family camcorder at home. I discovered videotaped interviews as a way to get students acquainted with each other during the first few weeks of school. Those interviews became the opening for my fall open house presentation. Nothing enchants parents more than seeing their child on TV.

How To

1. **Begin with a simple unit such as the basic interview.** Adjust the questions, answers and length of interview to the age level of the students.

2. **Operate the camera yourself the first time.** Let the students do the rest of the production, or combine with an older class and have them run the camera

3. **Divide the tasks.** Since there are two sides to video production, the technical side and the presentation side, combining with a class of older or younger students can be an exciting and rewarding experience for both.

4. **Bring in some professional interviews (sports are great).** Talk about interviewing and speaking skills. Watch professional interviews several times with the sound off and talk about the types of camera shots. Then turn the sound on and discuss the questions asked, the setting, voice and language (verbal and body) of the interviewer and guest.

5. **Discuss interviewing techniques.** Point out to students the manner in which the interviewer elicits answers to the questions and anticipates questions the television audience might have, as well as how the interviewer makes the guest feel comfortable (or perhaps not comfortable!). Discuss open-ended versus closed-ended questions. Have the students notice that a good interviewer does not interrupt the guest (a hard thing for students to avoid).

6. **Discuss audience.** Who will be watching this video, and what will that audience want to see and hear? Stress that video has two components, sound and sight. What they see must go with what they hear, and it must be visually pleasing and interesting to the audience. Video means movement. A shot of more than ten seconds is rare (and boring), and most are two to three seconds long.

7. **Set up complementary teams.** When you begin work, pair students heterogeneously—boys with girls and the outgoing with the quiet. Taping, as students practice and having them watch these "rushes," shows them quickly and effectively where they need to change.

8. **Design a set.** A convincing "set" for a news broadcast can be arranged easily in the classroom—a table, a wall map for background, some paper and pencils on the table to give the hands something official looking to do.

The Countdown

A crucial and often overlooked component of video production is the countdown. The first three to four seconds of the video will be cut off when the tape rolls back on itself. A proper countdown eliminates this problem. Standing to the side of the host and the guest so she can be seen by both but remain off camera, the floor director raises both hands in the air and begins the countdown. When she reaches "four" she begins to count silently on her fingers as the camera person releases the fade button and at the same time, turns on the camera. By the time the director has given the "take your cue" signal, roll back is completed and the entire production will be on the tape. When taping is finished the camera person again pushes the fade button, waits until the picture fades, then turns the camera off. These procedures prevent the end of the production from being cut off.

Pre-Production Check List

- ☐ Power source - AC adaptor or fully charged battery
- ☐ Video tape for each student - or a new tape for the class
- ☐ Tape in camera
- ☐ Lens cap off
- ☐ Camera on
- ☐ Check audio quality (especially important if you are using a mike)
- ☐ Check video quality - adjust tracking
- ☐ COUNTDOWN - "Script ready, guest

ready, audience ready, camera ready? Quiet on the set! In, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0 - Take your cue!"

Video production has become a way of life in my room. The students are already interested and knowledgeable since most of them have watched 10,000 hours of TV by the time they are five. They are their own best critics. Finally, on any hectic day, I have found no better way to quiet a room of active middle-schoolers than to say,

Camera ready?
Quiet on the set!
In 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0
Take your cue!

Supporting Talent Development is Only Half of the Answer: A Reexamination of Issues Raised in the September *Communicator*

by Barbara Clark

Opposing John Feldhusen is a bit like speaking against a national hero or a favorite teacher, for he is all the things you admire and want for a role model. There is never a doubt that he is sincere, thoughtful, caring, generous and enormously well intentioned. If the ideas he so passionately espouses were not so dangerous to a population that is already so badly underserved and so injurious to an important cause that has only recently made remarkable strides forward, one would be tempted to ignore his current pronouncements. However, the idea of abandoning advocacy for gifted children by replacing it with a call for talent development for all children cannot be ignored. So while it is necessary to put forward an opposing view and to clarify flawed arguments found in Feldhusen's recent writings in the September, 1993 *Communicator*, know that it is done as good educators always approach correction of behaviors, loving the person, just condemning the act.

Throughout the September issue are articles that editor Feldhusen has brought together to support the proposition that "identifying and developing talent in all children frees us from the problems of identification of the 'gifted few' and possible underrepresentation of special populations as well as the stigmatizing effects of the gifted label." Feldhusen would have us disregard the label we have given a group of children with special needs, insisting that to give them another title that would include a much larger population of children would alter the low priority in which they are held and would generate more acceptance. It is true of this group that they seem too often to engender threat and negative attitudes among the very professionals who should be concerned for their welfare. However, a title change is unlikely to change these children or the characteristics that make them resist educational conformity. These children are not just gifted two hours a week, or after school, or during the summer, or when the resource room is available or when they are performing. They are not just gifted in problem solving or research or critical thinking. They may express their giftedness in ways that are social, emotional, intuitive, creative, or even unacceptable, but if given the chance, they will express their giftedness. It

"...children are not just gifted two hours a week, or after school, or during the summer, or when the resource room is available or when they are performing."

is that chance, that opportunity, that is too often missing.

It is also true that no one can be against talent development or Renzulli's schoolwide enrichment. Everyone can support the development of talent for all children in every part of our planet. The fact remains that there are children who are already different, who by a favorable interaction of biology and environmental circumstance have developed unique needs. Their learning is different, their pace is different and their understanding of issues, content, relationships and innovation is different. These children are gifted. Advocates for gifted children can share a concern about the best possible education for all children without ignoring the specific needs of gifted children.

Perhaps it would clarify the discussion if we consider the definitions Feldhusen has used to differentiate the terms "gifted" and "talented." About the terms "gifted" and "giftedness" he says, "The concept of giftedness which emerged beginning with the work of Terman (1925) [author's emphasis]...viewed giftedness as a fixed, unitary trait manifested dichotomously." Of talent, he states, "Talents emerge from general ability as a combination of genetic dispositions, home and school experiences, and the student's unique interests and learning styles."

Of course Terman considered giftedness and intelligence as a fixed and unitary trait. Everyone in the 20s and 30s did. However, later in the 30s and into the 40s this idea of fixed intelligence was seriously questioned. It was not until the 60s that brain researchers (Diamond, 1988; Rosenzweig, 1966, 1984) began to produce powerful evidence that was to change the study of the nature of intelligence in ways that demanded that both intelligence and giftedness be redefined. Experience was then seen as an indispensable partner with heredity in the interaction that creates intelligence (Dobzansky, 1964; Rose, 1972; Thompson, Berger, & Berry, 1980). Evidence indicated that brain function can be enhanced as opportunities for stimulation in the environment are enriched. The inheritance provided by the genes was not found to limit the intellectual development, but only to direct a unique pattern of development, with the ultimate potential still unknown (Diamond, 1988, 1993; Hutchinson, 1986). The interdependent biological and experiential undergirding for any definition of intelligence, and giftedness, the label we use for high levels of development of intelligence, can no longer be denied. The myriad ways that intelligence can be expressed are defined by the uniqueness and multifaceted nature of the brain itself.

Guilford (1967) was another whose ideas must be acknowledged in a discussion of how beliefs have changed about intelligence and giftedness. It was through his insight that intelligence began to be seen as more than a one dimensional concept and took on the many sided view that writers such as Gardner (1983) and Sternberg (1985) propose in their work.

As a result, definitions of giftedness have been developed that allow identification of more than just cognitive and academic ability and include creativity, leadership, and performing and visual arts abilities. First recognized by Marland (1972) in a report to the Congress of the United States, such diversity is now commonly a part of definitions accepted throughout the United States and in many other countries. The practice of questioning the terms, such as giftedness, used to discuss high intelligence, or seeing them as limited, as Feldhusen does, can no longer be considered valid.

Giftedness may now be defined as a biologically rooted concept that serves as a label for a high level of intelligence, able to be enhanced or inhibited by the interaction between the genetic pattern and the opportunities provided by the environment. The label "gifted" indicates an advanced and accelerated development of functions within the brain, including physical sensing, emotions, cognition and intuition, and it may be expressed through abilities such as those involved in creativity, academic aptitude, leadership or the visual and performing arts. Gifted individuals are those who perform or show promise of performing at high levels in such areas and who, because of such advanced and accelerated development, require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools in order to develop their capability more fully. This definition has been used since the 70s (Clark, 1992) and is quite different from the narrow definition Feldhusen would have you accept as a rationale for the need to replace gifted education with talent development when he declares, "School programs must undergo change from traditional conceptions of the gifted few which favor select subgroups or populations and concentrate efforts instead on finding and nurturing special talents and abilities among all youth." The definitions now used for intelligence and giftedness sound very much like the definition Feldhusen is using for talent.

As to Feldhusen's concern that "large seg-

ments of some minority, economically disadvantaged, and culturally different populations are not represented in programs for the gifted and talented," that has been a concern for many programs at federal, state, and district levels, and a great deal of effort and money is being spent to remediate this concern. There is a problem with combining minority and culturally different populations with the economically disadvantaged, since, although there may be some overlap, these groups do not comprise a single population with a single solution available. There are, in fact, culturally different groups that are not underrepresented but are actually overrepresented in gifted and talented programs. Even if only the economically disadvantaged segments of the population are to be considered, to say that the cause is that "the conception of giftedness used most often in programs for the gifted conceptualizes human abilities as synthesized in a general unitary ability" and, therefore, works only for the "favored" populations is not justified. Further, to say that using "talent development" instead will "suggest a more analytical and more diverse view of human abilities, abilities which may be nurtured and aptitudes which are amenable to development" not only disregards the evolution of the concepts of intelligence and giftedness, but more importantly fails to recognize a far more serious problem. We now know that intelligence, however it is expressed, cannot be developed in a vacuum. It must be carefully nurtured, for if the functions of the brain cannot progress, they will regress. This precious giftedness is malleable, and it is dynamic. We must use it or lose it! Any human being, who, for whatever reason, does not have the opportunity to appropriately stimulate the abilities with which he or she was endowed will not develop those abilities to high levels. We would be better served to face the restricted environmental opportunities that poverty presents to too many of our children and try to change those limitations of opportunity than to develop a specious argument that seems to frame the problem in a way that could be remediated by the simple expedient of changing a name.

Feldhusen, as his scholarship, experience and generally kind nature would dictate, has expressed many valuable ideas and concerns. We *should* be concerned about many of the limitations now placed on the children for whom we advocate as well as all of the children of our nation. We would be well advised, as Feldhusen says, to "have wedded two programs, gifted education and talent development, into one more potentially effective and acceptable program." We have such a program now, and it is called Gifted and Talented Education. We must not limit our efforts, as he contends, in order to "focus our instructional expertise on the search for talent and on fostering talent for all youth..."

This is a time when we are about to receive an updated national report that carries a plea for more and earlier opportunities for gifted and talented students, more training for our teachers and more awareness on the part of our decision makers as to the educational needs of these gifted children. It is a time when the National Education Association has just passed a resolution supporting a national interest and commitment to appropriate education for gifted and talented children as part of the national educational reform movement. It is a time when we have in the White House a President who was one of the first to add his name to the Advisory Committee for the National Association for Gifted Children and publicly uses the term openly and with positive regard. It is also a time when, at the end of summer 1993, representatives from countries all over the world met as a World Council for Gifted and Talented Children. At this meeting the delegates from over 35 countries were asked to change the name of their journal in a way that would replace the term "gifted" with the words "talent development," and they chose to reject the suggestion, in part because they did not feel it represented the children they served. Surely we have other, more useful ways to expend our energy and time than in changing our name.

"We now know that intelligence, however it is expressed, cannot be developed in a vacuum."

While all who advocate for gifted and talented children must continue to be committed to quality education for all the children of this nation, indeed this world, and we must seek better solutions for the problems that face education today, we cannot abandon the unique needs of the gifted and talented children. The changes we must make and the solutions we must find for these children will be difficult, and finding ways to foster the gifts and talents in all children must be a part of that agenda. These are serious and immediate problems and

will require all of our energy, all of our creative abilities and all of our vision.

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Imagine. . . No Race, No Color, No Looks

If we had no race, no color, no looks.
Would Martin Luther King be in our history books?
Would we know Emmett Louis Till by name?
His killing was such a shame.
Would Rosa Parks be known to us?
Or would she be just a woman sitting where she pleases on a bus?

If we had no race, no color, no looks,
I couldn't judge you by what I see.
I would get to know you and that's better for me.
I couldn't prejudge you or stereotype you at all.
I wouldn't know whether you're short or tall.
I would have no fears lingering inside.
There would be nothing to be afraid of on the outside.

Why can't our world be this way.
Why do I have to imagine this, I say.
We should be together as one,
Not classify ourselves and shun.
All I can do is hope and say,
Why can't our world simply be this way?

Courtney Garmon, Grade 7
Cabrillo Middle School, Ventura

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Learning Differences: A Primer for Parents

by Madeleine D. Brandli and Kathleen Pommer

One of the most frustrating situations for parents is to be faced with the challenges of a gifted child who is not achieving in the school environment. What may come to mind are descriptives such as lazy, unmotivated, careless, distracted, or not working to potential. What may be overlooked and underestimated in the existence of learning and/or attentional disorders which the child cannot overcome or compensate for, in spite of high intellectual potential. Genetics and physiological factors place a certain portion of the population at risk for developing learning problems, and environmental influences have profound effects. According to Daniel Hallahan of the University of Virginia, the social/cultural changes of the past few decades may account in part for the perceived rise in the prevalence of learning disabilities. He cites the increased risk of biomedical damage to the central nervous system resulting from poverty, poor nutrition and substance abuse. Even in more affluent segments of society, Hallahan notes a decrease in the amount of social support available to children (parent/child learning time) due to television, organized athletics/after-school activities and the hours lost in transportation, the "phenomenon of children as commuters."

Criteria for the legal identification of learning disabilities rarely fit a child identified as gifted, yet a similar, or even more extreme discrepancy between potential and achievement may exist. What then can parents do to ensure the educational progress and psychological well-being of such a child? Prevention, identification, accommodations and advocacy can serve as steps to bridging the gap between weaknesses and strengths, between failure and success.

Prevention

Medical research continues to document the direct cause and effect relationship between repeated ear infections during infancy and persistent language impairments in such children. Allergies are often associated with infections, and in both cases, the resultant obstruction to normal sound can permanently alter and delay development in the language centers of the brain. Auditory perceptual processing problems may result. This is not a hearing loss, but rather a problem with the processing of information received through the ears. As a result, a child may also experience difficulty with rote memory and sequencing. Basic learning activities such as reading, handwriting, spelling, and arithmetic all require memory and step-by-step sequential processing. A new test called the Early Language Milestone Test (ELM) can be given to infants and toddlers by pediatricians to

detect problems while they are still correctable. The Learning Disabilities Association of California has reported that a significant percentage of toddlers who experienced delayed language also go on to develop some type of language-based learning disability. Early recognition and treatment are highly successful.

Other relatively common medical conditions which interfere with learning directly or by complications of medications include allergies, asthma (the leading cause of school absence) and thyroid disorder. Dr. Boris Catz, a thyroid specialist in Beverly Hills, CA, notes that low thyroid function can be a cause of poor memory and other learning problems and is aggravated in times of stress (i.e., tests, a new class or school). A thorough medical exam by a physician tuned into developmental and medically related learning problems can be very helpful. In the case of children with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), the pediatrician can serve as advisor to the par-

ents/teacher and advocate for the child in dealing with the school system.

Identification

Parents can be more effective in meeting the challenges of learning problems if they become intimately familiar with various measures of learning and personality styles and seek out such information about their children. A test measuring sensory modality, such as VAKT (for visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile), administered by a school psychologist or other professional, can provide parents and teachers with invaluable insight into how a child acquires and manipulates information, defining weak vs. strong channels for processing. Children, gifted or otherwise, rarely, if ever, *choose* to selectively fail. Parents can begin to recognize, *and teach their children* as they mature, why one type of learning activity meets with failure and another meets with success. Self-understanding promotes self-acceptance and growth.

A wealth of guidance for families and teachers who strive to help bright, poorly achieving students succeed is available. Of particular note are *Smart Kids with School Problems* by Patricia Vail and *To Be Gifted and Learning Disabled* by Susan Baum, Steve Owen and John Dixon. Both books contain sections on how to interpret information provided on the subtests of the WISC-R, a test commonly given to students as part of the gifted identification process. The test must be administered by a licensed professional; the results can be analyzed by a knowledgeable parent or teacher to gain extremely useful information about discrepancies among the various subtests. Gifted children with learning disabilities, as well as some with attentional disorders, frequently show striking, extreme discrepancies in their patterns of strengths and weaknesses. These can be compared with information from the VAKT or other sensory modality tests for an even clearer learning portrait.

Difficulties in sustaining or focusing attention have been the subject of research for many years, most of which supports differences in brain function as a significant factor. New research now also links genetic thyroid hormone dysfunction to hyperactivity in some ADHD populations. Because of strong compensatory abilities, the diagnosis of ADHD may not be made until third or fourth grade in some gifted children, according to Dr. Martin Baren, a developmental pediatrician in Orange, CA. Those with attentional disorders who are not hyperactive (ADD) may not ever be identified, yet will suffer from similar learning problems related to inattention. Without help, many of these children experience school failure and loss of self-esteem, with problems persisting into adulthood. For the school-age child up to age ten, Dr. Dorothy Davies Johnson, MD, FASP, has written a common sense, easy to understand guide for parents and teachers entitled *I Can't Sit Still: Educating and Affirming Inattentive and Hyperactive Children*. Her advice is reassuring and positive, empowering parents and teachers with concrete and specific suggestions.

In addition to the above information, teachers, parents and children alike benefit from identifying and understanding the powerful impact of personality and temperament differences on family and peer relationships, as well as teacher-student interactions. What may be a subtle learning difficulty in one classroom may become a serious failure situation in another when stressed by a combination of teaching styles/expectations and personality mismatches. Early bird parents may wonder why their night owl child does not perform well in a first period math class. Parents who require silence and a desk to read may not grasp the legitimacy of their child's need to study curled up on a beanbag with a lap desk and music in the background. The closer a child is to the edge of his/her ability to compensate for learning differences or to adapt to teacher/parent expectations, the more likely are personality and other factors to influence success or failure. *Please Understand Me* by Keirsey and Bates offers an informative and accessible introduction to the world of personality and temperament with an approach based on the acceptance and celebration of differences.

"Parents who require silence and a desk to read may not grasp the legitimacy of their child's need to study curled up on a beanbag with a lap desk and music in the background."

Accommodations

The myth of the gifted assures us that such children do not require special help—they will get it on their own. For a gifted child with

learning differences, this attitude spells disaster. For such a child the label "gifted" may actually prevent access to the learning accommodations available to other students. Armed with knowledge about their children's learning strengths and weaknesses, parents can explore all types of learning strategies with their children and their teachers, using as many approaches as necessary for success. Developmental experts stress the use of more than one sensory channel for best results.

Many children with learning differences suffer from problems in memorization. Memory aids may include color coding and highlighting, mnemonics, rhyming, music, dancing, sandpaper tracing. (How many of us learned how to spell "encyclopedia" from Jiminy Cricket?) Dr. Baren notes that some children will never be able to spell well or consistently remember math facts or multiplication tables. Arthur Bornstein of the Bornstein School of Memory in West Los Angeles has developed an intriguing math memory technique called "Multiplication Memorizer Method." He uses highly imaginative story pictures and other creative techniques to enhance memory.

Of all traits considered difficult to deal with in home and school learning environments, lack of organization seems to create the most havoc. A highly organized child is a rare and much sought after group member in a gifted classroom. Children with learning difficulties and attentional disorders seem to have the most difficulty, and those with ADHD/ADD are also typically delayed in their development of organizational abilities. With teacher and parent cooperation, learning planners/organizers are extremely effective, especially those involving the entire classroom. Wristwatches with alarms, color-coded book covers and binders matched to teachers' files, and cubby holes for each student for all home-bound papers help keep students on track.

Long-term and large-scale projects and assignments require special planning. Dividing them into smaller sections of time or content is essential. Global, nonsequential thinkers (the majority of gifted students) may need to begin in the middle and work outward, since they may not be able to do a sequential outline. Mind mapping, semantic webbing and other nontraditional note-taking techniques should be taught in addition to typical outline formats. Colored posterboard and Post-It notes make an easy system for visually-kinesthetically organizing ideas for a paper or project. Copies of reference and research quotations can also be used in this way to create a project framework. Parents can work with their children at home to develop these skills, even if the overburdened classroom teacher cannot integrate them into the classroom schedule.

Intractable handwriting, deficient grammar and poor spelling are red alerts for parents and teachers to provide children with early access to word processors with spell checkers and grammar checkers. These computer applications teach without recriminations, demand immediate feedback and provide positive reinforcement! As a confidence booster, many children with unreadable penmanship can be taught to do beautiful calligraphy, testimony to the different brain systems employed. Large-scale graph paper works wonders for lining up arithmetic problems for young children with visual-spatial processing difficulty. After the primary grades, calculators should also be considered as part of regular school supplies, especially for children with poor rote memory. Portable notebook computers and other high technology aids such as graphing calculators are fast becoming standard, even required, equipment in colleges and businesses. In bypassing the mechanical output problems associated with learning, memory and expressive difficulties, these devices permit students to concentrate on and achieve at far higher levels of learning and performance.

"Failure is not so threatening when viewed in the perspective of work analyzed for improvement. Instead of 'I can/I can't' this type of assessment is the more developmentally appropriate 'I can/I can't yet' model."

The process of evaluating a child's growth and achievement by methods in addition to traditional grades can be a learning tool in itself for students and a self-confidence builder. The Portfolio Assessment method encourages teachers and students to use tangible visible records of growth and is superior to more traditional grading systems in many ways. Children evaluate their own papers and decide where improvement and change are needed and the rea-

sons for this decision. Throughout the year they keep track of their progress by evaluating similar work. They review comments from teachers on past work before submitting the next assignment. This method teaches children the skills of self-analysis and interpretation and how to identify their own growth. If a child can see that growth occurs as a result of quality practice (not just repetition), confidence builds. Failure is not so threatening when viewed in the perspective of work analyzed for improvement. Instead of "I can/I can't" this type of assessment is the more developmentally appropriate "I can/I can't yet" model.

Advocacy

Gifted children with learning difficulties have few advocates in the typical school environment. Described by Priscilla Vail as the "double mask," the gifts frequently mask the disabilities, or the disabilities hide the gifts. In both circumstances, the child suffers a loss of confidence and self-ĕsteem. Parents are often the only buffer children have against inappropriate placement or expectations arising from unidentified learning differences/disabilities. Giftedness demands its own advocacy; learning differences double the burden.

Conclusion

The special needs of a child with both exceptional gifts and learning differences present parents with learning challenges of their own. The references listed provide parents with basic information to begin to meet those challenges—a primer for action. Success *is* attainable. The prescription includes prevention when possible, acceptance and identification at an early age, a commitment to accommodations based on extensive knowledge and assessment, and vigorous long-term advocacy.

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Future Issues

Spring issues for the *Communicator* will feature the following topics:

Language Arts for Gifted Students - April

Identifying the Gifted Student -June

Submit articles to Jean Drum, *Communicator* Editor, 7822 Belgrave Avenue, Garden Grove, CA 92641.

CAG Scholarship Winner - Tylene Pommer

A letter from Tylene Pommer

One of the CAG scholarships for 1993 went to Tylene Pommer of Irvine, who has had science as a passion since her earliest school years. Her list of honors and achievements is distinctly impressive (also varied—it includes St. Bernard raising and drill team/dance team as well as a host of chemistry related projects).

Dear Mr. DeVries and the CAG Board,

Again, I would like to thank you for allowing me, through your generous scholarship, to continue my work in biochemistry and the effects that man-made pollutants have on our environment.

Because of your generosity I was able to complete another phase of my research. While ignorance may be the most expensive aspect of life, education does not come cheap either, and this project was no exception.

Tylene Pommer, CAG scholarship award winner

My project is **Metallic Death**: ***Acute Toxic Effects of Heavy Metal Pollutants of the Escherichia Coli Bacteria in our Sanitary Waste Treatment System.*** My question for this phase of the project was *what are the concentration levels (Mg/L) of heavy metals in industrial waste water that will injure the E. coli bacteria,* and it was answered quite successfully.

The toxic effect of industrial heavy metal on the coliform bacteria in our sanitary waste treatment system was investigated in this phase. Sewage samples, containing coliform bacteria, were obtained from the Irvine Ranch Water District's Michelson Waste Treatment Plant. Standards of the common industrial heavy metals, cadmium, chromium, copper, lead, nickel, silver, zinc and cyanide (gold) were prepared in concentrations of 2 mg/L, 20 mg/L, 2,000 mg/L and 20,000 mg/L (later diluted 50%). Media of Lauryl Tryptose Broth (LTB) was prepared for sewage fermentation. Duplicate sets of samples containing 10 ml of metal standards and 10 ml of sewage were mixed in test tubes and allowed to stay in contact four hours. Vials were inverted into fermentation test tubes and filled with 10 ml of LTB and sterilized. Duplicate fermentation tubes were inoculated for 48 hours at 35 degrees C. The injury effect on the coliform bacteria was observed by looking for trapped CO_2 inside the vials. Results showed that increased levels for all heavy metals except lead had a mortal effect on the bacteria.

In my experiment I found that the heavy metal concentration, higher than the allowed discharge limit, acutely affected the coliform bacteria. Lead was the exception. This was an unexpected result to me, since humans are so adversely affected by lead. Silver, on the other hand, killed the bacteria at concentrations of 100 mg/L and above. In fact, I even retested silver because it was so much lower than I expected.

Copper, cyanide and nickel killed the bacteria at concentrations of 1,000 mg/L and above. Cadmium, chromium and zinc killed the bacteria at concentrations of 10,000 mg/L.

From my research in the early phase of the project, I know that the embryonic life in the marine environment is easily injured by toxic heavy metals. What I didn't know was that an industrial spill, releasing metal concentrations as low as 100 mg/L could acutely affect the coliform bacteria in the sewage treatment system. A spill like this would result in a public health risk, with raw sewage released into the environment, and it could have the potential for great injury to the marine life.

This phase of the research is crucial to any further developments.

Without the help of the CAG board my dream to complete this phase would never have been realized. Your generous contribution for the furthering of scientific research has made it a reality. Equipment and chemicals are beyond my working budget. Before the reality comes the dream. Thank you so much for making the dream become *my* reality. I am anxious to begin the next phase of this research and I will continue to let you know the progress.

Continued from page 1

Ann Cierley was in charge of formulating and planning the Summer Seminar and making the many arrangements. It owes its existence to her hard work, gifted thinking and persistence. When an injury sidelined Ann for the month of July, Janis Van Dreal stepped in and took over the on-site administration with enthusiasm and skill.

ness, science, government, academia and the visual and performing arts.

During the rigorous two-week program, students participated in activities ranging from DNA extraction and manipulation labs to theater sports; from "great minds" role-playing to Flamenco lessons; and from an Athenian Forum on Plato's *Republic* to artistic performances. As a culmination, small groups designed and presented their own Utopias for California in the year 2020.

The fast-paced curriculum introduced students to new concepts and subjects in an environment which encouraged teamwork as well as individual risk. Students were presented with challenges which demanded thoughtful, researched responses and with experiences which required participation and exploration.

Science for seminar participants was not facts and formulas. It was conducting experiments, drawing conclusions and making ethical choices. It was having a working geneticist as a team teacher in a lab to alter simple DNA. It was listening to presentations on superconductivity and virtual reality and learning that university professors and scientists are not ivory tower "nerds" but are warm, down-to-earth and outrageously funny. Science was also nature walks, an evening spent listening to nature's music and enjoying the exclusive use of Westmont's observatory. Science was discovering both the power of modern technology and the wonder of our own humble place in the universe.

Participants studied and applied social studies by learning about California firsthand from elected officials, business leaders and representatives of nonprofit agencies. Since all participants had a vested interest in California's future, there was a true need to understand current problems and projections. Listening to others and understanding diverse viewpoints became essential to the challenge of solving our problems. Social studies was not learning history; it was facing the present and forming the future.

Underlying all subject areas was a study of Humanities. The classical philosophers have always struggled with definitions of truth, beauty and ideal societies. In addition to guest lecturers from UC Santa Barbara, students themselves became guest presenters, taking on the roles of philosophers such as Aristotle, Plato, Spinoza, Berkeley and Locke to argue their points on given topics. Seminar students

Thoughts from the Summer Seminar

masquerade
all the world's a stage
do you take off a mask to act
or wear the new identity?
the shield and safety
in constantly acting
protect me from the pain.
barriers are built
all for the sake of self.
do you choose the mask,
or does it decide who you are?
the world lies behind the mask.
your hidden self is allowed to be,
but make sure you can distinguish
between shell and that
which lies deep inside.
the greatest pain
the greatest lesson
the greatest love
is when the chrysalis is broken
the butterfly emerges,
the leaf supports the butterfly,
which learns to dance in the sun.

Emilyann Ritzman

Life is unlike a freeway.
It is not necessary to speed up to
Others to get on track.
Instead, close your eyes and progress at
Your own pace.
Only then will life's trip have meaning.

Amanda Kaplan

Clear Glass is shining in the sun.
Scratched glass is hard to see through.
Broken glass looks like cobwebs.
Maybe we should stop looking through glass.

Anonymous (by Ben)

While my world comes crumbling
down around me,
I stand Tall though weak in the knees.

Kimberly Crawford

strongly identified with the ongoing challenge of humans to discover themselves and define their environment. Philosophy became a powerful tool for learning acceptance of self and of others. Ultimately, seminar participants learned that learning is a vital, creative process, a necessary tool for forming opinions, making choices, solving problems and making an impact on others.

"Philosophy is so incredible. Now I can read to explore my own ideas."

"The philosophical studies...allowed me to extend my factual information into a logical and orderly backboard that I could stand against."

"There was no right or wrong—your mind was spinning 360 degrees."

The Staff

The key to creating this exciting learning environment was, of course, the teaching staff. Four exemplary instructors shared their expertise and themselves in classes, at meals and during recreation times. They were historian Mike Arburn from Oak Ridge High School in the El Dorado UHSD, Jerry Chris from Mission Viejo whose area is philosophy and communication, Scott Zgraggen, chemist and biologist from Vacaville High School, and Mike Hoctor of La Quinta High School in Garden Grove who is an actor, graphic artist and theater arts instructor. Their range of experience and perspective was invaluable in making the program both broad and deep. Though the curriculum was intellectually demanding, these teachers skillfully arranged activities and grouped students to make interpersonal demands as well as to be ready with support when it was needed.

In addition to the four teachers, two residential counselors (also credentialed teachers) participated in lessons and supervised students at meals and in the dormitory. Like the rest of the staff, they shared a genuine concern for young people and a willingness to interact on a personal level.

All staff served as role models, often participating in sessions along with students and facilitating an atmosphere of mutual respect. It was natural for students to address staff members by first names. Students became aware of learning as a process of personal as well as intellectual growth, and they were nurtured in this process.

"I liked the staff who made this seminar the best one I've been to in my whole life. They were all funny, warm and treated us as intelligent and clever adults."

"The teachers really opened up and were real living people. They breathed their life where we could see it. If school were always that way, life would be really different."

"Having great teachers who can relate to you on a more personal level added to the experience in a way that can't even be described."

"I like the philosophical debates and the fact that I could share my opinions. That it was okay to have opinions. I like the way people accepted me for who I was."

Jeffrey O'Neal, Sr. Research Assistant Cal Gene, Bethany Nettifee and Emilyann Ritzman in Genetic Manipulation Lab

Awareness of Self

The greatest outcome of the CAG Summer Seminar was not the new knowledge of DNA, philosophy, theater or politics. It was the self-awareness and self-acceptance that serves as a basis for all future learning. Not one participant —teen or adult—was the same at the end of the two week program.

Personal insights were sometimes painful, but increased awareness of self led to an appreciation and acceptance of others that is critical to easing the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

"I've learned that I can open up. I think I will be more expressive and not so shy."

"I have learned more about myself in that I see my goals more clearly. I also have intensified my desire to reach them. I have seen that there is much more to learn and that it is OK to be imperfect. This was a wonderful experience."

"Talking with others and hearing their viewpoints has helped me see how much my world or anyone's can have an impact on something-...now I look at some things differently, from many points of view."

"I've learned how to pull off my mask and interact more freely with others. Before I came here, I was a bit of a conformist and did what other people like....I need to make time each day to be myself."

Acceptance of Others

Basic to the success of the seminar was that students learned from each other as well as from seminar studies. Too often gifted adolescents are without true peers. The very gifts which make them unique can also leave them isolated.

By creating a gathering of intellectual peers, the CAG Summer Seminar allowed for social and personal growth unprecedented for most participants. An atmosphere of risk taking was carefully nurtured and modeled by staff, and students thrived on being themselves.

Over the course of the two-week program, strong bonds and supporting relationships were formed. Acceptance of self led to acceptance of

Ben Ellenberger and Melanie Holm work together in the lab

others. What one student had nicknamed "nerd camp" before arrival, soon became "family."

"I liked the time we had...just to talk and reflect and absorb all that we were exposed to."

"I've learned there are still people I can trust in the world and I met 28 of them here."

"What I liked best was the people. Everyone's open mind. Questions and answers. All my experiences. All my new friends."

"I learned to treat people as if they count, because we all do."

"The kids here are individual, independent thinkers with strong voices and opinions."

Making a Difference

It is a goal of all education to prepare students for productive, personally fulfilling lives. But we have a special interest in encouraging gifted individuals to become involved in shaping the future.

The ultimate outcome of CAG Summer Seminar 1993 was to make students aware of societal issues which directly affect them. This was coupled with an increased self-awareness and the confidence that each of us can and should make a difference. That it all occurred in a learning environment which was as much fun as it was demanding is the definition of "school" for which we all strive.

"After visualizing California in the future and learning about what I can do, I feel a stronger tie to it. Before coming, had I only known the problems, I would have thought, 'Gee, I should move to Maine.' But now that I feel I can really help and make a difference, I will go back home knowing I won't abandon or run away from the problems I know can be put right if we try."

"I have seen different points of view and have learned how to try to incorporate them into one idea that we can all agree on."

"To look to the future you need to know about yourself and this camp allows you to find yourself. You look deep inside."

"I have learned many facts and lots of information abut California now and projections about its future, but most important, I think I have learned ideas."

CAG Summer Seminar 1993
Program Summary

The theme for the two weeks was "California in the 21st Century." Within that theme, the following sub-themes were explored.

Diversity

Activities: Exploring personal views, diversity
Overview of projected realities (stats) for California
Reading: *The Tao of Pooh*
Video: *Zoot Suit*
Diversity Walk: Architecture and biology of camp
Diversity Lab: Microscopes and pond water

Speakers: Gil Garcia, Santa Barbara City Councilman/Architect, "Latino/Hispanic Issues"
Hymon Johnson, UC Santa Barbara, "Diversity and Connectedness"

Metamorphoses

Activities: Library Research - Truths/ideas through history
Theater Games
Debate: Great Ideas
Exploration: Questions about California's future

Speakers: Peggy Good-Cordero, Adm. Asst. to Sen. Gary Hart, "Political and Social Issues in California's Future"
Stephen Marcus, UC Santa Barbara, "Virtual Reality"

Manipulation of the Environment

Activities: Computer - SimEarth: The Living Earth Computer Game
Acid Rain Simulation/Lab
"Music in the Woods" - nature walk and evening at the observatory

Speakers: Panel on Environmental and Development Issues in California
joe Fontaine, past President, Sierra Club
Linda Krop, Environmental Defense Center
John Martin, Developer, past President, BIA
Tom Carey, Developer
Roy Shults, University of California Regent, "Future of Higher Education in California"

Manipulation and Power

Activities: Art
Animation; students create animated videos
Genetic manipulation lab

Speaker: Jeffrey O'Neal, Sr. Research Assistant CalGene "Genetic Engineering and California Agriculture"

Power

Activities: DNA Bacterial Transformations: Students selected traits in their "children," but discovered that chosen strengths come with unexpected weaknesses
Reading: Plato's *Republic*
Discussion of Athenian Forum
Transactional Analysis: Power of Role Playing
Slides and Discussion: Eastern and Western cultures
Machiavelli Power Play: students take roles of historical personalities

Speaker: Ken Kihlstrom, Physicist "Superconductivity"

Power and the Future

Activities: Utopia Project: What should California be in the future?

Speakers: Billie Bowen, caricaturist
Lesson in caricatures: capturing a person's essence (she also did a caricature of each student)
Sandra Kaplan, CAG President, and other women, "Being Female and Gifted"

The Future

Activities: Presentation of Projects

The following special cultural events also occurred during the seminar.

Piano recital by Dr. Robert Haag
Bilingual dance workshop with Ms. Rosemary Cruz
Santa Barbara "Art Walk"
Santa Barbara Mission
Santa Barbara Museum of Art
Santa Barbara Courthouse

Janis Van Dreal may be reached at West High School in Bakersfield, CA 805/832-2822.